

Dear Explorer,

Congratulations on securing a position on the official roster of the Corps of Discovery. Your mission is to explore uncharted territory west of the Mississippi River. The objectives of this expedition are many. Below you will find a summary of those objectives to assist you in preparing and understanding the importance of this journey to our country.

- I. To explore the Missouri River and other streams likely to lead directly to the Pacific Ocean. If a suitable water route for trade can be found, the United States will have the key to moving resources and goods across the continent.
2. To get to know Indian nations encountered along the way as well as time permits. Treat the Indians well. Tell them about the United States and encourage them to trade with us.
3. To plot the Missouri's tributaries, islands, and rapids using various mathematical instruments measuring latitude and longitude. Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, has commissioned a special map of the West to be made for this expedition. There are only three places with known positions on it: St. Louis, the Mandan Indian villages on the upper Missouri River, and the mouth of the Columbia River. Completion of this map will be a great accomplishment.
4. To carefully observe, gather and record plant and animal specimens, keep weather records, take soil samples, and examine fossils and minerals. All specimens will need to be classified, named and labeled with the date and the place they were found.

In addition, part of your responsibility will be to keep a journal of the expedition. Written documentation will be most valuable to those back home. We have confidence you will be successful in this endeavor and look forward to the contributions you will make in helping our great nation grow.

Sincerely,

||| *Captain Meriwether Lewis and Captain William Clark*